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## COMMUNICATIONS

### THE IMPORTANCE

### THE TECHNIQUE

### THE PITFALLS

Ontario Status of  
Women Council

January, 1978



YOUR MESSAGE

1. It's important to know, in advance, what you're there to say. When you have done your homework, you can come back strongly to an interviewer who is unsympathetic or doesn't understand the issues.
2. A thorough knowledge of the facts provides protection to the person being interviewed. And it's easier to be self-confident if you know you're saying the right thing.
3. As members of an organization, we may feel a compulsion to rationalize the need for our organization. Don't fall into the trap of going on and on, with every dreadful detail of discrimination against women. We all know women have been ripped off! Do get into your real message as quickly as possible.
4. Get the major issues concerning women down pat. Be able to explain the problems concisely, and supply the solutions that your organization proposes.
5. Don't allow the interviewer to intimidate you. You almost certainly know more about the subject at hand than she/he does - and a good interviewee makes any interviewer look good.
6. Don't be hung up on statistics. Once you know the facts, percentages and figures which are approximate rather than exact will work for you. (i.e. a million and a half women in the Ontario work force, we know that women earn 30 to 50% less than men for doing the same jobs, one person in every 10 does this or that).
7. Have the accomplishments of your organization down pat. You'll be asked why your organization was established and how you are financed.



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8. Don't be too personal. Never sound like a woman with a personal chip on her shoulder. You're concerned about all women - and about the rights of men, and children too - should anyone ask.
9. In a television interview, you are a missionary, and converting the uncommitted is your major task.
10. Know which matters are within the area of provincial responsibility - and which are within federal or municipal jurisdiction. (In a discussion of Family Property Law, for example, separation and the ensuing division of property fall under Provincial law; divorce law is Federal).
11. Don't fall into the trap of disparaging women or the women's movement. We're all human, and we're all imperfect. It would be a tactical error to "put down" any women. Avoid glib phrases like "women are their own worst enemies", "militant women's libbers have hurt the cause", and "I'm not a women's libber". Of course you're a women's libber! We all are.
12. Utilize the reference material you have. Minutes provide a concise record of decisions taken. Annual Reports show accomplishments, year by year. Discussion papers deal with the philosophy of changing social attitudes.
13. Distinguish between personal opinions and your organization's stand. Anything which has been discussed and dealt with officially may be described as "your organization's position", whether that position was taken last month or last year.

Anything else is fair game. "We have not dealt formally with that, but I think...." will do nicely.





YOU

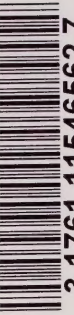
The way you look - and sound - affects the reception your message gets.

1. If you're diffident, bored, uncertain, no one will take your message - and ours - seriously.
2. Any message delivered in a droning monotone, or nasal whine is going to be ignored. Breathe deeply, speak with animation. Be interested in yourself and your message - and the viewers will be interested too.
3. Don't slump in your chair. Dorothy Sarnoff, a U.S. television expert says, "Never let your back touch the back of your chair." Lean toward the interviewer sometimes, and the interviewer will be more responsive to you.
4. Remember, it's television, not still photography. Don't remain frozen in one position, and keep your eye off the baleful red light of the television camera. Move and gesture naturally, smile when it's appropriate to do so, and look at your interviewer exactly the way you'd look at anyone with whom you're having a fascinating conversation.
5. In choosing clothing for the interview, first, remember to opt for something wonderfully comfortable. If you're preoccupied with preserving decency by tugging at a too-short skirt, or a too-low neckline, you may forget the purpose of the interview. Stay away from "busyness" in dress, from tiny, distracting patterns, from op-art prints, from too many frills, and above all, from clanking jewelry.





6. If you're asked to appear early for "make-up", do so. And present a nice bare face for the make-up artist. Even though, on a day to day basis, you espouse the "natural" look, television lights, and colour cameras can turn an un-made face into a rice pudding with black currant eyes. If you are allergic to make-up, say so, and offer the make-up artist the hypoallergenic products you use at home.
7. Avoid distracting movements and mannerisms. If, heaven forbid, you're seated in a swivel chair, don't swing back and forth. Don't tap on the arm of your chair, and no matter how fascinating the world of television production is, resist the urge to look around the darkened studio to see just what all those people are doing. From the viewer's vantage point, you and your interviewer are having a fascinating conversation - and she's eavesdropping.
8. Don't take yourself too seriously. A combination of humour and directness is disarming.



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6. If you're asked to appear early for "make-up", do so. And present a nice hair care for the make-up artist. Even though, on a day to day basis, you expose the "natural" look, television lights, and color cameras can turn an unmade face into a fine looking with black contour eyes. If you are allergic to make-up, say so, and after the make-up artist the type allergic products you use at home.

7. Avoid distracting movements and gestures. If, heaven forbid, you're seated in a velvet chair, don't swing back and forth. Don't tap on the arm of your chair, and no matter how comfortable the world of television production is, resist the urge to look around the daisied studio to see just what all those people are doing. From the viewer's vantage point, you and your interviewer are having a fascinating conversation - and that's the interesting.

8. Don't take yourself too seriously. A combination of humor and bitterness is desirable.